

Statistics Weekly

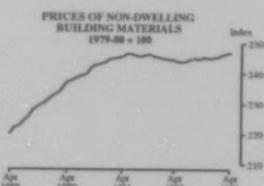


Thursday, 24 June 1993

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Prices of building materials continue to rise



Prices of materials used in the construction of new houses increased by 0.9 per cent between March and April 1993, the highest monthly increase since early 1990.

Prices of materials used in other forms of building rose by 0.1 per cent in April, continuing the recent trend of small monthly increases.

Increases in the price of structural timber and ready mixed concrete were mainly responsible for the overall increase in April.

In the year to April 1993 prices of materials used in house building increased by 3.6 per cent while there was a 1.1 per cent increase for materials used in other forms of building.

PRICES OF BUILDING MATERIALS, APRIL 1993
Percentage change

City	House building		Other than house building	
	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Sydney	1.3	3.2	0.0	-0.6
Melbourne	1.0	5.4	0.2	3.0
Brisbane	0.4	2.5	0.1	1.9
Adelaide	0.4	4.4	0.1	1.2
Perth	0.2	0.9	-0.2	0.6
Hobart	0.3	0.9	0.2	0.8
Weighted average of six State capitals	0.9	3.6	0.1	1.1
Darwin	— Not available —		0.5	0.3
Canberra	0.6	2.1	-0.1	0.5

For further information, order the publications Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra (6408.0) and Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Building, Eight Capital Cities (6407.0), or contact Mark Dickson (06) 252 6198.

Manufactured goods prices steady

The price index of articles produced by manufacturing industry showed no change in April 1993.

There were small price increases recorded for about one-third of the items in the index. The only increase of significance was for refined petroleum products.

These increases were offset by price falls in about 20 per cent of the items in the index. The main decreases were for exported beef, refined aluminium and ginned cotton.

Continued ...



The Manufacturing Division index increased by 2.2 per cent between April 1992 and April 1993.

PRICES OF MANUFACTURED GOODS, APRIL 1993
Percentage change

Manufacturing sector	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Petroleum products	2.7	11.0
Transport equipment	0.3	3.7
Food, beverages and tobacco	-0.3	2.6
Other machinery and equipment	-0.2	2.4
Chemicals and chemical products	-0.4	1.3
Clothing and footwear	0.1	1.0
Fabricated metal products	0.1	0.1
Basic metal products	-0.5	-0.8
<i>Total manufacturing</i>	0.0	2.2

For further information, order the publication Price Indexes of Articles Produced by Manufacturing Industry, Australia (6472.0), or contact Peter Cordy on (06) 252 5541.

Further fall in manufacturing materials prices

The price index of materials used in manufacturing industries fell by 0.9 per cent in April 1993, the fifth consecutive month in which the index has recorded a decrease or no change.

Lower prices for home produced materials were the main influence on the April movement, although prices of imported inputs also fell slightly (see table below).

Lower prices for wheat, live animals and crude petroleum were the main contributors to the decrease in home produced materials in April.

The main contributor to the decrease in the imported materials index was pulp, paper and paper materials. This was partly offset by increased prices for imported timber.

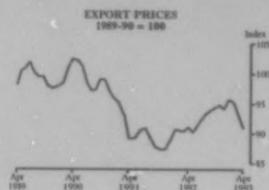
Between April 1992 and April 1993 prices of manufacturing materials increased by 3.6 per cent, the smallest annual increase since June 1992.

PRICE INDEXES OF MATERIALS USED IN MANUFACTURING, APRIL 1993
Percentage change

Source of material	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Imported	-0.2	5.5
Home produced	-1.1	2.6
<i>All manufacturing</i>	-0.9	3.6

For further information, order the publication Price Indexes of Materials Used in Manufacturing Industries, Australia (6411.0), or contact Geoff Brown on (06) 252 5348.

Fall in export prices



The Export Price Index fell 2.2 per cent between March and April 1993.

Price decreases were recorded for about half the items in the index. The main contributors to the overall decrease were iron ores and concentrates and coal, following renegotiation of contracts with Japan. Wool prices also decreased significantly.

These decreases were partly offset by small price increases for about one-third of the items in the index. The main increase was for gold.

Between April 1992 and April 1993 the Export Price Index decreased by 0.1 per cent.

The wide range of price changes for different commodities is shown below.

EXPORT PRICES, APRIL 1993
Percentage change

Commodity group	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Prepared food stuffs	0.9	8.5
Gold, diamonds and coin	3.3	8.3
Motor vehicles, aircraft and vessels	0.6	5.5
Live animals and animal products	-3.0	4.8
Products of chemical or allied industries	-0.3	3.6
Machinery and mechanical appliances	-0.1	3.3
Mineral products	-3.5	2.5
Vegetable products	-1.7	1.8
Base metals and articles of base metals	-3.5	-5.5
Wool and cotton fibres	-6.2	-23.9
All groups	-2.2	-0.1

For further information, order the publication Export Price Index, Australia (6405.0), or contact Peter Cordy on (06) 252 5541.

Dollar keeps import prices rising

The Import Price Index rose by 0.2 per cent in April 1993.

The fall in the value of the Australian dollar against most of the major trading currencies (with the exception of the US dollar) led to price rises in a range of items.

The most significant price increases were for timber (mainly reflecting higher prices for North American softwood) and for miscellaneous manufactured articles.

Between April 1992 and April 1993 the index increased by 9.6 per cent.



Price changes for selected items are shown below.

IMPORT PRICES, APRIL 1993

Percentage change

<i>Selected items</i>	<i>From previous month</i>	<i>From corresponding month of previous year</i>
Crude materials	2.9	14.0
Machinery and transport equipment	0.1	11.7
Mineral fuels, lubricants and other related materials	-0.8	11.2
Commodities and transactions	4.3	8.8
Miscellaneous manufactured articles	0.6	7.5
Food and live animals	0.2	7.1
Manufactured goods	-0.1	6.7
Chemical products	-0.3	6.3
Beverages and tobacco	0.5	6.1
Animal and vegetable oils, etc.	0.9	-3.2
<i>All groups</i>	0.2	9.6

For further information, order the publication Import Price Index, Australia (6414.0), or contact Geoff Brown on (06) 252 5348.

In brief ...

Wine sales

The trend in domestic sales of Australian wine by winemakers is showing quite strong growth to April 1993. The trend grew by 2.0 per cent between March and April 1993, the fifth consecutive monthly increase since a turning point in November 1992, which ended seven months of decline. In April 1993, the wine sales trend reached its highest level since July 1988.

In seasonally adjusted terms, total domestic sales of Australian wine by winemakers in April 1993 were 28.3 million litres, an increase of 4.1 per cent on March 1993 and a 12.9 per cent increase on April 1992.

Using original data, total domestic sales for April were 26.8 million litres, an increase of 10.1 per cent on March 1993. This increase was generally spread across all wine types. A breakdown of table wine sales, reveals an increase in both the white and red table wines, of 7.9 per cent and 16.2 per cent respectively in April. In both cases the increase in sales was spread fairly evenly between bottles and soft packs.

Australia exported 9.4 million litres of wine in March 1993 with a value of \$28.3 million. This volume represents a 48.6 per cent increase on February 1993 and a 58.6 per cent increase on March 1992. Table wine exports now account for over 90 per cent of total wine exports, and have grown from a monthly average of 2.7 million litres in 1989-90 to 7.1 million litres per month over the first nine months of 1992-93.

Source: Sales of Australian Wine and Brandy by Winemakers, April 1993 (8504.0).

Lease finance

The value of goods under new lease finance commitments in April 1993 (excluding leveraged leases) totalled \$378.0 million, a decrease of \$65.9 million (14.8%) on March 1993 but an increase of \$5.4 million (1.5%) on April 1992. It should be noted that April 1993 was a four week reporting period for some banks whereas March and April 1992 were five week reporting periods.

With the exception of money market corporations (up \$7.6 million (33.0%)), all major lessor groups recorded decreases in April 1993 over March 1993, with banks down by \$50.5 million (28.5%), general financiers \$16.2 million (30.1%), and finance companies \$6.8 million (3.6%).

The decrease in total finance lease commitments was mostly due to the fall in new commitments for shop, office, furniture, fittings and equipment, down \$26.3 million (72.5%), total motor vehicles \$20.4 million (7.7%), electronic data processing equipment \$19.5 million (46.3%), and manufacturing equipment \$7.8 million (43.6%).

Source: Lease Finance, Australia, April 1993 (5644.0).

Personal finance

Personal finance commitments for April 1993 totalled \$1,587.8 million, a decrease of \$239.6 million (13.1%) over March 1993 and a decrease of \$40.9 million (2.5%) over April 1992. All types of lender recorded decreases in April 1993, with banks down \$168.9 million (14.1%), finance companies \$41.6 million (12.5%), credit co-operatives \$20.5 million (9.4%) and 'other' lenders \$8.5 million (10.8%).

With the exception of the Northern Territory, all States showed a decrease in personal finance in April 1993, the largest being in New South Wales, down \$88.3 million.

Source: Personal Finance, Australia, April 1993 (5642.0).

International cargo

The value of total inward cargo for the December quarter 1992 was \$15,735 million, an increase of \$1,266 million (9%) compared with the September quarter 1992 and up \$2,937 million (23%) on the December quarter of the previous year. The gross weight of this cargo was 10.3 million tonnes, up 11 per cent on the September quarter 1992 and up 18 per cent on the December quarter of the previous year.

The value of total outward cargo for the December quarter 1992 was \$16,128 million, an increase of \$1,196 million (8%) on the September quarter 1992 and up \$2,018 million (14%) on the December quarter of the previous year. The gross weight of this cargo was 81.1 million tonnes, virtually unchanged from both the September quarter 1992 and the December quarter of the previous year.

For sea cargo, the value of inward cargo for the December quarter 1992 was \$11,657 million, an increase of \$1,304 million (13%) compared with the September quarter 1992. The largest increases were recorded in machinery and transport equipment, up \$826 million (23%) to \$4,461 million; commodities and transactions, n.e.s., up \$138 million (21%) to \$810 million and manufactured goods classified chiefly by materials, up \$104 million (6%) to \$1,912 million. The only decrease was recorded for miscellaneous manufactured articles, down \$41 million (3%) to \$1,421 million.

Source: Foreign Trade, Australia: International Cargo, December Quarter 1992 (5440.0).

Continued ...

Inquiries

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Census counts — NSW

The total number of people counted in New South Wales on census night, 6 August 1991, was 5,732,032. This represents a 6.1 per cent increase in the census count since the 1986 Census.

The Sydney Statistical Division increased by 173,891 people (5.2%), the Mid-North Coast Statistical Division increased by 32,099 people (15.4%), the Hunter Statistical Division increased by 30,918 people (6.4%), and the Illawarra Statistical Division increased by 28,133 people (9.1%). The Far West Statistical Division was the only one to decrease, by 979 people (3.4%).

The Sydney Statistical Division accounted for 61.7 per cent of people counted in the census in New South Wales in 1991.

In the Sydney Statistical Division, the statistical local areas with the largest increases in population from 1986 to 1991 were Fairfield City with 21,577 more people, Gosford City with 19,678, Blacktown City with 19,268 and Wyong Shire with 18,100.

Source: Census Counts for Small Areas: New South Wales, 1991 Census of Population and Housing (2730.1).

Order from the following:

Expected releases over the fortnight to 6 July

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| [23] | Registrations of New Motor Vehicles, Australia, May 1993, Preliminary (9301.0; \$10.70) |
| [25] | Manufacturing Production, Australia, May 1993 Preliminary (8301.0; \$10.70) |
| [30] | Balance of Payments, Australia, May 1993 (5301.0; \$16.30)
Building Approvals, Australia, May 1993 (8731.0; \$13.30) |

Selected releases: 16 to 22 June

General

Northern Territory Business Indicators, June 1993 (1307.7; \$7.50)

Census of Population and Housing

1991 Census — Census Counts for Small Areas, NSW (2730.1; \$25.00)

Social statistics

Apparent Consumption of Foodstuffs and Nutrients, Aust., 1990-91 (4306.0; \$37.70)

National accounts, finance and foreign trade

Australian National Accounts: State Accounts, March Qtr 1993 (5242.0; \$21.40)

Australian National Accounts: State Accounts on Floppy Disk, March Qtr 1993 (5242.0; free) — new issue

Foreign Trade, Aust.: Merchandise Exports and Imports by Country, March Qtr 1993 (5422.0; \$19.90)

Foreign Trade, Aust.: International Cargo, December Qtr 1992 (5440.0; \$9.70)

Personal Finance, Aust., April 1993 (5642.0; \$6.10)

Lease Finance, Aust., April 1993 (5644.0; \$6.10)

Agriculture

Livestock Products — Meat, Qld, April 1993 (7204.3; \$5.10)

The latest — consolidated to 22 June 1993

Key national indicators	Period	Units	Latest figure available		Percentage change (a) on	
			Original	Seasonally adjusted	Previous period	Corresponding period last year
National accounts						
Gross domestic product (GDP(A)) at 1989-90 prices	Mar. qtr 93	\$m	n.a.	94,192	0.6	2.6
International accounts						
Balance on current account (b)	Apr. 93	\$m	-1,458	-1,719	12	-47
Balance on merchandise trade (b)	"	"	25	-242	66	—
Balance on goods and services (b)	"	"	-311	-535	41	—
Merchandise exports	"	"	4,777	4,850	2	3
Merchandise imports	"	"	4,802	5,092	-2	17
Net foreign debt	31 Mar. 93	\$m	160,615	n.a.	-3.9	7.9
Net foreign liabilities	"	"	208,338	n.a.	-1.5	6.8
Consumption and investment						
Retail turnover at current prices	Apr. 93	\$m	7,905	8,071	0.7	1.5
New capital expenditure at 1989-90 prices	Mar. qtr 93	\$m	4,944	5,551	-9.2	0.5
New motor vehicle registrations (d)	Apr. 93	no.	40,449	45,714	1.4	5.2
Production						
Manufacturers' sales at 1989-90 prices	Mar. qtr 93	\$m	31,512	33,677	1.1	2.3
Dwelling unit approvals	Apr. 93	no.	14,155	15,557	6.9	10.6
Building approvals	"	\$m	1,958	2,102	6.6	17.3
Building work done at 1989-90 prices	Dec. qtr 92	"	6,391	6,086	2.0	6.1
Prices						
Consumer price index	Mar. qtr 93	1989-90 = 100.0	108.9	n.a.	0.9	1.2
Articles produced by manufacturing industry	Apr. 93	1988-89 = 100.0	114.3	n.a.	0.0	2.2
Materials used in manufacturing industries	Apr. 93	1984-85 = 100.0	124.8	n.a.	-0.9	3.6
Labour force and demography						
Employed persons	May 93	'000	7,715.7	7,696.9	0.6	0.4
Participation rate †	"	%	62.4	62.2	0.3	-0.5
Unemployment rate †	"	%	10.8	10.7	0.1	0.1
Job vacancies	Feb. 93	'000	29.8	28.9	-4.4	3.3
Average weekly overtime per employee	"	hours	1.4	1.16	3.0	3.8
Estimated resident population at end of qtr	Dec. 92	million	17.6	n.a.	0.2	1.1
Short-term overseas visitor arrivals	Mar. 93	'000	258	253	8.4	21.3
Incomes						
Company profits before income tax	Mar. qtr 93	\$m	3,850	4,887	23.9	36.9
Average weekly earnings, full-time adults, ordinary time	Feb. 93	\$	593.70	n.a.	1.2	0.8
Financial markets						
Interest rates (c) (monthly average)	Apr. 93	% per annum	5.25	n.a.	-0.10	-1.70
90-day bank bills †	"	"	7.55	n.a.	-0.25	-1.90
10-year Treasury bonds †	"	per \$A	0.7118	n.a.	1	-7

(a) Based on seasonally adjusted figures where available. (b) For percentage changes, a minus sign indicates an increase in the deficit; no sign means a decrease in the deficit or an increase in the surplus. (c) Source: Reserve Bank of Australia. (d) Later figures expected to be released Wednesday, 23 June 1993.

NOTES: † = change is shown in terms of percentage points. n.a. = not available.

Percentage change from same period previous year

Key State indicators	Period	Percentage change from same period previous year								
		NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
New capital expenditure*	Sept. qtr 92	-15.9	-15.2	2.9	-29.3	0.3	-18.8	n.a.	n.a.	-10.6
Retail turnover (trend estimate)	Apr. 93	-1.3	3.0	5.7	-0.1	7.6	1.8	n.a.	7.6	2.1
New motor vehicle registrations†	Apr. 93	-0.6	14.8	5.5	1.3	4.6	20.2	20.3	-12.0	5.2
Number of dwelling unit approvals*	Apr. 93	1.3	-0.8	25.9	13.7	4.9	5.2	-26.6	13.3	10.6
Value of total building work done	Dec. qtr 92	0.7	-1.2	15.8	15.2	16.4	13.1	-9.5	-0.5	5.6
Employed persons*	May 93	-1.6	-0.3	2.5	2.2	2.8	2.4	-9.1	6.1	0.4
Capital city consumer price index	Mar. qtr 93	1.1	1.1	1.5	1.9	0.3	1.6	1.4	1.8	1.2
Average weekly earnings (full-time adult ordinary time)	Feb. 93	-1.5	1.8	3.2	1.7	0.3	2.7	4.2	3.2	0.8
Population	Dec. 92	0.9	0.5	2.5	0.5	1.2	0.5	1.0	1.5	1.1
Rooms nights in licensed hotels and motels, etc.	Sept. qtr 92	3.9	2.5	3.7	0.2	2.0	-0.7	-0.7	1.7	2.9

* Seasonally adjusted except for NT and ACT. † Seasonally adjusted except for Tas., NT and ACT.

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